

AMENDMENT TO ABSTRACT

Please replace the Abstract with the following paragraph:

There is provided a sternal closure system for re-approximating the left and right halves of a patient's longitudinally incised sternum during a surgical procedure in the thoracic cavity. The system includes a first anchor, disposed inside the left half of the sternum, a second anchor, disposed inside the right half of the sternum, and a fixing element adapted for rigid connection between the first and the second anchors, respectively disposed within the left and right halves of the sternum, facilitating separation of the left and right halves of the sternum closed in this way, in case of post-operative emergency surgical procedures. An apparatus for fixing and removing the anchors is also provided.